(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) At present there is no such proposal.

(c) Operational and resource constraints.

[*English*]

Sanitary problem in the country

1997. SHRI BHUBANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item cautioned "India among dirtiest in world" appearing in the Patriot dated November 11, 1991; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D.K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) Yes, sir.

(b) It is a fact that sanitary conditions in our cities and towns are not ideal and there is much scope for improvement.

Sanitation is primarily a State subject and it is the responsibility of the State Government/UTs and Urban local bodies to plan and maintain sanitation schemes. However, Central Government also supplement the efforts of the State Governments/UTs.

Under the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade Programme from 1981-90, coverage of sanitation in urban areas till the end of December, 1990 was 45.93% (provisional).

During the 8th Five Year Plan, there is a scheme for the elimination of manual scavenging in the country to the minimum extent possible. This will be achieved by conversion of day latrines/construction of low cost water-seal port flush latrines at the rate of 500 towns per annum, on whole-town basis. The scheme is being operated through HUDCO by providing a mix of central assistance in the form of subsidy and loan from HUDCO to State Governments/UTs.

The Central Government have also circulated a package proposal to the pilot projects for solid waste management over a period of three and on coast sharing basis by the Centre and the State/local bodies in the ratio of 50 : 50.

[*Translation*]

Crossings at Markendih and Murkunda

1998. SHRI BHUBANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is no railway crossing at Markedih between Parsabad and Chobe and at Murkunda between Barkakana and Patratu on Grand Chord line in Hazaribagh district;

(b) whether the Government propose to construct railway crossing at these places for preventing accidents; and

(c) if so, by what time and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Railway can take action